



# House of Representatives

General Assembly

**File No. 526**

*January Session, 2013*

Substitute House Bill No. 5388

*House of Representatives, April 16, 2013*

The Committee on Planning and Development reported through REP. ROJAS of the 9th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

## ***AN ACT REQUIRING CITIES AND TOWNS TO DESIGNATE A VETERANS' SERVICE CONTACT PERSON.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Subsection (b) of section 27-102l of the general statutes is  
2 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective*  
3 *October 1, 2013*):

4 (b) The commissioner may appoint a unit head to administer a  
5 veterans' advocacy and assistance unit for the aid and benefit of  
6 veterans, their spouses and eligible dependents and family members.  
7 Such unit shall conduct an annual training course for any city or town  
8 employee or representative from a regional planning organization  
9 designated a veterans' service contact person pursuant to subsection  
10 (b) of section 27-135, as amended by this act. The unit shall have a staff  
11 of not less than eight men and women, including six service officers,  
12 and clerical personnel. The unit head and the service officers shall be  
13 veterans, as defined in section 27-103, or veterans who were awarded

14 the armed forces expeditionary medal for service by the armed forces.  
15 At least one of the service officers shall be a woman having a  
16 demonstrated interest in the concerns of women veterans, who shall be  
17 responsible for addressing those concerns, and, effective upon the next  
18 opening of a service officer position occurring on or after July 1, 2010,  
19 at least two of the service officers shall be individuals having bilingual  
20 proficiency in English and Spanish, within existing authorized  
21 positions. Each service officer shall successfully complete a course in  
22 veterans' benefits within one year of commencement of employment  
23 and shall be assigned to one of the five congressional districts of the  
24 state.

25 Sec. 2. Section 27-135 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
26 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2013*):

27 (a) Any city or town, either separately or with one or more other  
28 cities and towns, may, by ordinance, establish a local veterans'  
29 advisory committee which shall have the responsibility of carrying out  
30 locally the duties and purposes of this section and, within their charter  
31 powers and as otherwise provided by law, may make available to such  
32 local committees the necessary funds to carry out their duties and  
33 responsibilities. The committee may [(a)] (1) act as the coordinating  
34 agency in all matters concerning veterans and their dependents,  
35 coordinating the activities of public and private facilities concerned  
36 with veterans' reemployment, education, rehabilitation and adjustment  
37 to peacetime living; [(b)] (2) cooperate with all national, state and local  
38 governmental and private agencies in securing services and benefits to  
39 which a veteran or his dependents may be entitled; [(c)] (3) use the  
40 services and facilities of the veterans organizations so far as possible to  
41 carry out the purposes of this section; and [(d)] (4) encourage and  
42 coordinate vocational training services for veterans.

43 (b) Any city or town that (1) has not established a local veterans'  
44 advisory committee pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, and (2)  
45 does not otherwise provide funding for a veterans' service officer shall  
46 designate a city or town employee or a representative from a regional

47 planning organization to serve as a veterans' service contact person in  
48 such city or town. Any city or town employee or representative  
49 designated as a veterans' service contact person shall carry out the  
50 duties described in subsection (a) of this section and shall complete an  
51 annual training course conducted by the veterans' advocacy and  
52 assistance unit, as described in subsection (b) of section 27-102l, as  
53 amended by this act. For purposes of this section, "regional planning  
54 organization" has the same meaning as in section 4-124i.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	October 1, 2013	27-102l(b)
Sec. 2	October 1, 2013	27-135

**VA**      *Joint Favorable Subst.-LCO C/R*      **PD**

**PD**      *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

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**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:** None

**Municipal Impact:**

Municipalities	Effect	FY 14 \$	FY 15 \$
Various Municipalities	Potential Cost	Minimal	Minimal

**Explanation**

The bill requires municipalities that do not have a veterans' advisory committee or veterans' service officer to appoint an employee to act as a veterans' services contact person, and requires these appointees to attend an annual training course.

There is a potential cost, expected to be minimal, to municipalities associated with any mileage reimbursement or paid leave they may offer to employees required to attend the annual training course.

There is no fiscal impact associated with requiring the Department of Veterans' Affairs' advocacy and assistance unit to conduct an annual training course for local veteran service contact persons.

**The Out Years**

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

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**OLR Bill Analysis****sHB 5388*****AN ACT REQUIRING CITIES AND TOWNS TO DESIGNATE A VETERANS' SERVICE CONTACT PERSON.*****SUMMARY:**

This bill requires any municipality that does not (1) have a local veterans' advisory committee or (2) fund a veterans' service officer to designate an employee or a representative from a regional planning organization to be its veterans' service contact person. It specifies the contact persons duties.

The bill also requires the Department of Veterans' Affairs' Veterans' Advocacy and Assistance Unit to conduct a training course annually for such contact persons and requires the contact persons to complete that course.

The bill makes conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2013

**VETERANS' SERVICE CONTACT PERSON'S DUTIES**

Under the bill, the contact person must:

1. coordinate all matters concerning veterans and their dependents;
2. coordinate public and private facilities concerned with veterans' reemployment, education, rehabilitation, and adjustment to peacetime living;
3. cooperate with all national, state, and local government and private agencies in securing services and benefits to which a veteran or his or her dependents may be entitled;

4. encourage and coordinate veterans' vocational training services;  
and
5. work with veterans organizations as much as possible to carry  
out these activities.

Currently, local veterans' advisory committees must do these activities.

### **REGIONAL PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

By law, a regional planning organization is a regional council of governments, a regional council of elected officials, or a regional planning agency.

### **COMMITTEE ACTION**

Veterans' Affairs Committee

Joint Favorable Change of Reference

Yea    14    Nay   0    (03/12/2013)

Planning and Development Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea    19    Nay   0    (04/01/2013)